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Germany (Russian Zone)

The August-Bebel SED District  
School at Kaulsdorf This document

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1. The August Bebel-Schule

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1. The August-Bebel-Schule, the SED district school at Kaulsdorf, provides political indoctrination courses for SED members from every section of Berlin. Students are selected by the SED Kreisleitung, but attendance is voluntary. Wages forfeited through the fortnight's absence from work to attend the school are made good by the Party. The school's operations are financed by the SED Landesverband and supervised by the Landesverband's Director of Kreis Schools, Fritz Oelsner. Also under the supervision of this office is the Landesschule for Mark Brandenburg at Beesdorf.
2. The August-Bebel-Schule is set up in a building consisting of

2. The August-Bebel-Schule is set up in a partially-destroyed Wehrmacht establishment consisting of five stone barracks and one wooden building. Two of the stone barracks plus the wooden house are now in use, while the others are being rebuilt with materials provided by the Russians. When the reconstruction work is completed, the SED administration plans to have twenty students from each Bezirk in Berlin attending the school at one time. The school's first cycle of instruction--8 April to 22 April--was attended by about 150 students, forty per cent of whom were women. The heaviest representation came from the Russian sector of Berlin, while the smallest delegation--three members--came from Zehlendorf. Neu-Kölln provided twenty-two students, while Charlottenburg sent twenty. The second cycle (3 May-17 May 1947) took care of 147 students. Of these, a total of twenty-five came from the western Bezirke of Berlin (Charlottenburg, Tiergarten, Halensee, Wilmersdorf, Zehlendorf), while each of the eastern Bezirke sent more than twenty delegates.

The students at the August-Bebel-Schule are divided into three groups: white, black, and mixed.

3. The students at the August-Bebel school are mostly workers and low-grade white-collar employees who hold minor party positions. Of the 147 trainees in the second cycle at Kaulsdorf, only ten at the most had a high school education. Only a third of the students gave the impression of really understanding what was taught them. Seventy-five per cent of the students were members of the KPD (and in a few cases, the SPD) before 1933, while perhaps twenty of them had taken part in underground activities during the Nazi era.

The faculty of the August-Be...

4. The faculty of the August-Bebel-Schule consists of the following instructors:

Kellberg, administrative head of the school  
Dellschew  
Griepentrog

Kollberg, a  
Dellschew  
Griepentrog  
Irrgang

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Lehmann  
 Frau Liese Mäder  
 Paul  
 Prauss  
 Radelt  
 Willi Zöllner

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All of these have attended a special teachers' training course at the SED Reich Party School at Lieberwalde and are paid functionaries of the party.

5. The SED still suffers from a shortage of teachers because few party members care to take up so trying and time-consuming an occupation. The instructors at Kaulsdorf are given but one day off out of every fourteen, and only now and then find time in the evenings to visit their families in Berlin. In addition to their teaching functions, they have duties to perform at the SED headquarters of their individual Bezirke.
6. Frau Liese Mäder, who gives lectures on "Combatting the Nazi Ideology," started teaching at Kaulsdorf on 8 May 1947. She is 42 years of age, married, has a seven-year-old daughter and lives in Neu-Kölln. She spent some months in the USSR in 1931 as an employee of a German firm.
7. Willi Zöllner holds seminars with students from the western parts of Berlin. He is a good lecturer and a man of some culture, speaks English, French, and some Russian which he picked up during a three-months' stay in Moscow in 1932. He was born in Breslau, attended public schools until he was fourteen, after which he studied on his own. When he was eighteen he became a policeman in Hamburg, worked as a Sozialistische Arbeiter-Jugend (Young Socialist Workers) organizer, later joined the KPD and became a functionary of that party. It is rumored that he did underground work while serving as a soldier on the western front in World War II.
8. The instructors Prauss and Irrgang did not become Communists until after World War II. Prauss has since left the August-Bebel-Schule to join the editorial staff of the magazine, "Wille und Weg." Irrgang taught in the SED day school at Pankow before coming to Kaulsdorf to serve as a substitute teacher.
9. Radelt, a veteran KPD man, addresses his students in a Berlin dialect and is very popular. His wife, a member of the Women's Committee (Zentralfrauen-ausschuss) of the SED, spent several years in Russia before 1933 and studied at the Lenin School in Moscow.
10. The students are quartered at the August-Bebel school during their course of training. They may not leave the area without permission of the administration, and requests for passes to visit Berlin are frowned upon. Meals are served free in return for food ration stamps. Books must be purchased by the students.
11. The instruction consists of a daily three-hour lecture followed or preceded by a four-hour seminar at which the topic of the day is discussed. Another hour is devoted to individual studies. In the course of the second instruction cycle, the following lectures were given: "Introduction to Marxism"--two lectures (Griepentrog), "The Nature of the SED" (Prauss), "The SED and the Working class" (Dellschow), "Combatting the Nazi Ideology"--two lectures (Mäder), "The Fight against Monopoly Capitalism"--two lectures (Zöllner), "Our Struggle for Democracy" (Paul), "What is Socialism?" (Radelt). The lecture on "Germany and the International Situation" could not be given owing to the illness of the visiting lecturer, Referent Matern of the Landes-leitung. On 13 May 1947, functionaries of the SED in the various Kreise of Berlin came to Kaulsdorf to speak to the students from their districts on the day-to-day problems arising from party work.

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12. At the end of the course the seminar leaders make a report to the Kreisleitung concerned on the progress of each of their students. This report includes a recommendation as to the party function for which the particular student is thought to be best suited.
13. In addition to the local SED day schools, the Kreisschulen, the Landesschulen, and the Reich Party School at Liebenwalde, a still higher school exists. It is run by the SMA for the training of German Communists in administrative methods. Nothing further is known about this institution.

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